

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MOSCOW 05173 161758Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----161759Z 111968 /40
R 161035Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6338

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 5173

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EXDIS

E. O. 11652: XGDS-4
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, UR, US
SUBJECT: SENIOR KGB OFFICIAL WARNS LEADING JEWISH REFUSENIK
NOT TO HAVE CONTACT WITH EMBOFF

1. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT MARK AZBEL, A LEADING MUSCOVITE
REFUSENIK AND ORGANIZER OF THE FIFTH
ANNIVERSARY SESSION OF THE SUNDAY SEMINAR, WAS
CALLED TO THE KGB EVENING OF APRIL 15. MOST OF THE
CONVERSATION CONCERNED PLANS FOR THE ANNIVERSARY
SESSIONS OF THE SEMINAR (SEPTEL). HOWEVER, AZBEL
WAS TOLD BY HIS KGB INTERLOCUTOR, A GENERAL GAVRILOV, THAT
ONE OF THE REASONS THAT AZBEL'S LONG-STANDING APPLICATION
TO LEAVE THE USSR MIGHT NOT BE APPROVED IN THE NEAR
FUTURE WAS HIS RELATIONS WITH CERTAIN FOREIGNERS. IN
PARTICULAR, IT WAS KNOWN THAT AZBEL HAD BEEN AT THE HOME
OF AMERICAN EMBASSY OFFICER PRESEL ON MARCH 23, PRESEL
WAS A WELL-KNOWN ANTI-SOVIET, AND AZBEL SHOULD NOT BE
SEEN WITH SUCH PEOPLE. PRESEL WAS PARTICULARLY DANGEROUS,
AS HAD BEEN PROVED BY AN ARTICLE IN THE SOVIET PRESS.

2. AZBEL REPORTEDLY TOLD GAVRILOV THAT HE HAD LONG
KNOWN PRESEL AND THAT HE CONSIDERED HIM NEITHER ANTI-
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SOVIET NOR DANGEROUS. THE FACT THAT A NEWSPAPER
CARRIED A STORY ABOUT SOMEONE DID NOT MEAN THAT THE
INFORMATION WAS NECESSARILY TRUE. HE ADMITTED THAT
HE HAD BEEN AT PRESEL'S HOUSE ON MARCH 23, AND
ADDED THAT HE OFTEN SAW PRESEL, THAT HE LIKED HIM
AND THAT HE INTENDED TO CONTINUE TO SEE HIM.

3. GAVRILOV MERELY REPEATED THAT SEEING PEOPLE SUCH AS PRESEL WOULD NOT HELP AZBEL TO GET EXIT PERMISSION.

4. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE APPEARANCE OF THE LIPAVSKIY "OPEN LETTER" AND COMMENTARY IN MARCH 4 IZVESTIYA THAT WE HAVE HAD ANY REPORTS THAT SOVIET SECURITY AUTHORITIES HAD WARNED DISSIDENTS SPECIFICALLY NOT TO SEE PRESEL. IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT THE AUTHORITIES SHOULD HAVE KNOWN ABOUT AZBEL'S VISIT; THE ARRANGEMENTS WERE MADE OPENLY, BY TELEPHONE, AT AZBEL'S INITIATIVE.

5. AS DEPARTMENT AWARE, PRESEL HAS BEEN TAILED ALMOST CONTINUALLY, BOTH ON FOOT AND IN HIS CAR, SINCE HIS RETURN TO THE USSR. SINCE MARCH 30, HE HAS BEEN THE SUBJECT OF FAIRLY CONTINUOUS HARASSMENT. THIS TAKES SEVERAL FORMS, OF WHICH TELEPHONE CALLS LATE AT NIGHT, ARE ONE. MORE SERIOUS, THOUGH, PRESEL HAS OFTEN BEEN OSTENTATIVELY PHOTOGRAPHED AT EXTREME CLOSE RANGE, SOMETIMES BY UP TO FOUR PLAINCLOTHESMEN AT A TIME. THIS HARASSING PHOTOGRAPHY HAS OCCURRED IN THEATERS, OCCASIONALLY WHEN PRESEL AND HIS SPOUSE HAVE GOTTEN OUT OF THEIR CARS, AND WHEN PRESEL HAS BEEN WALKING.

6. PRESEL ACCOMPANIED (WITHOUT INCIDENT) VOLSPEAKER WILLIAM JACKSON ON HIS CALL, APRIL 11, ON SUPREME SOVIET OFFICIAL TOKMAKOV IN THE KREMLIN. WE PLAN TO HAVE PRESEL ACCOMPANY AMBASSADOR TO UFA APRIL 20-24.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 16-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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